



“Hope In The Grimdark” - December 7, 2025
Sermon by Pastor Emeritus Bryan Wilkerson

Group Leader Notes

We live in a world that often feels grimdark—bleak news cycles, polarization, war, fear for the next generation, personal disappointments and unanswered prayers. In this Advent message, Pastor Bryan Wilkerson takes us from grimdark, hopepunk, and hopecore in pop culture to the quiet story of Zechariah and Elizabeth in Luke 1. Their long season of delayed dreams and unfulfilled prayer becomes a powerful window into: What hope is Why hope matters so much Where we ultimately find real hope Through their story, we discover: Hope sustains us – even when it’s feeble. Hope rewards us – even when it’s not what we expected. Hope inspires us – even when fulfillment is still in the distance. And ultimately, we learn that hope isn’t mainly about what, when, or how... hope is about Who. “The hopes and fears of all the years are met in Thee tonight.” Wherever life feels dark or uncertain—personally or globally—this message invites you to bring those longings to Jesus and ask Him to “do something good with them,” in His way and His time.

Main Scripture Reading: Luke 1:5–25; 57–79; Hebrews 11–12; Romans 8

Group Discussion

Begin in prayer before reading and discussing the text.

1. **What Are You Hoping For Right Now?:** Zechariah and Elizabeth carried long-term, deeply personal hopes that seemed impossible.
Question: *What is one hope—big or small—that you’ve been carrying for a long time? How has waiting shaped your faith, for better or worse?*
2. **Hope Sustains, Rewards, and Inspires:** The sermon taught that hope sustains us when we're discouraged, rewards us even when the outcome differs from expectations, and inspires us even when fulfillment is far off.
Question: *Which of these three aspects of hope—sustaining, rewarding, or inspiring—do you most need right now? Why?*

3. **Hope Is a Who, Not Just a What:** Pastor Bryan emphasized that biblical hope centers on the person of Jesus—God showing up.

Question: *Where do you see Jesus “showing up” in your life or community today? And where do you most need Him to show up?*

Let’s Pray

https://youtu.be/5F2SWMs26W8?si=19Pjan73CBoBgt_h

